various concerns, as reported in the Asian Age on 6th January, 1999 under the caption US to India: List nuclear missiles needs;

(b) if so, whether such act constitutes breach of international law which prohibits intervention in the internal affairs of an independent sovereign nation; and

(c) what steps Government have taken to ensure that such irresponsible act is not repeated any more?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) and (b) the Asian Age of 6th January, 1999 carried a report containing excerpts from an interview by the US Ambassador in which the Ambassador *inter alia* reportedly described GOI' policy statements on no-first-use of nuclear weapons and not indulging in any arms race as "encouraging but...general". He further expressed the hope that Government would be "more clear in defining what this notion is, as it was vital to de-escalating tensions and not getting caught in an unintended arms race

in the region". This does not amount to "questioning nuclear preparedness to meet potent threats".

(c) government have made clear that its minimum nuclear deterrent policy is not a fixity and will be determined in the light of our security perceptions. Government has also stated that it will not accept any limitations on its defence capabilities for responding to possible future threats to national security.

China's protest against statement regarding Taiwan

372. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) Whether Government's attention has been drawn towards the statement made by the union Urban Affairs Minister wherein he has described Taiwan as an independent country;

(b) whether China has protested against such a description of Taiwan; and

(c) if so; what is Government reaction thereon and whether there has been a change in Government policy with regard to Taiwan?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) Government's attention has been drawn to the press reports in this regard.

(b) and (c) In response to a Chinese demarche, we have reiterated Government's consistent policy on relations with Taiwan. Government of India do not maintain any official or diplomatic relations with the "Republic of China" Under this policy framework, Government promotes non-official economic, trade and cultural links with Taiwan to enhance trade, tourism and investment.

Indo-American Dialogue

373. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY:
SHRI JANARDHASNA POOJARY:

Will the MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the eighth round of Indo-Amcrican dialogue on issues relating to security, disarmament and non-proliferation took place in New Delhi in the last week of January, 1999;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the final outcome of the dialogue;

(c) whether at the end of the dialogue a joint statement was issued wherein both sides expressed satisfaction with the outcome of the talks; and

(d) if so, the basic of such satisfaction and whether any concrete agreement was arrived on any specific issue?